

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 15, 2008

Philadelphia Man Sentenced to Federal Prison for Assault and Attempted
Sexual Assault Upon the Defendant's Defense Attorney

(More)

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PHILADELPHIA – A Philadelphia man was sentenced to a total of 300 months in federal prison today for his conviction on charges in connection with his assault and an attempted sexual assault of his defense attorney, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Cynthia M. Rufe, of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (EDPA), who presided over the bench trial, sentenced Kareem Millhouse, 31, to 180 months in prison, to be served concurrently to the 71-year prison term he is already serving for a conviction in the EDPA. In addition, Judge Rufe sentenced Millhouse to 120 months to be served consecutive to the EDPA sentence.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Philadelphia was recused from the case since the attack occurred during a proffer in a criminal case being prosecuted by the EDPA. Consequently, the case was tried by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Deborah Prisinzano-Mikkelsen and Norman Gross, both of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Camden.

On Nov. 15, 2007, Judge Rufe convicted Millhouse of all five counts of an Indictment that was returned by a federal grand jury in Philadelphia on Aug. 3, 2006. Millhouse was convicted on one count each of attempted aggravated sexual abuse, attempted sexual abuse, assault, attempted escape and possession of a dangerous weapon in a federal facility. Federal jurisdiction in the case was satisfied since the incident occurred within a federal facility.

During the trial, Judge Rufe heard testimony and viewed evidence regarding Millhouse's attack on his defense attorney while they met in an interview room at the William J. Green Federal Building in Philadelphia. Judge Rufe heard that following the victim's appointment as Millhouse's counsel, and after several meetings with Millhouse at the Federal Detention Center, the victim had discussions with the EDPA regarding Millhouse's potential assistance and cooperation.

The EDPA and the defendant, along with his defense attorney scheduled a meeting, commonly referred to as a "proffer session," to discuss Millhouse's potential cooperation with the government. Before a proffer session began on July 7, 2006, Millhouse and his defense attorney were afforded a few minutes to speak privately regarding legal issues.

In convicting the defendant, Judge Rufe found that after being left alone to confer with his defense attorney, Millhouse leaned in toward the victim and stated words to the effect of, "if you scream, I'll cut your throat." Millhouse then displayed a razor blade that he had stole from the prison and threatened to slit her throat if she raised her voice. Millhouse then told the victim that he had not had sex in a long time and wanted to have sex with her, but wanted her to "leave alive."

According to testimony, Millhouse lunged at the victim while still holding the razor blade. The victim then screamed and attempted to run from Millhouse, who grabbed her and threw her over a table, causing her to sustain injuries to her head, hand, right knee and neck.

According to testimony, several law enforcement officials heard the victim scream and ran into the interview room and subdued the defendant.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Rufe consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI Philadelphia Division, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Robert F. Downey for investigation of the case.

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Defense Attorney: Rocco Cipparone, Esq. Haddon Township